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Message Text

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VIA TELEX: FROM USIS/USNATO DATED JUNE 14, 1974

BRUSSELS, JUNE 14 --

NETHERLANDS DEFENSE MINISTER HENDRIKUS VREDELING TODAY PROMISED THE NATO ALLIES THAT HIS COUNTRY WOULD NOT GO AHEAD WITH ANY MILITARY FORCE REDUCTIONS UNTIL MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE WARSAW PACT HAVE REACHED A POSITIVE CONCLUSION. THIS WAS CONFIRMED BY US OFFICIALS AT NATO HEADQUARTERS IN BRUSSELS AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE'S SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING OF DEFENSE MINISTERS.

IN THIS CONNECTION, AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THAT U.S. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS ROBERT ELLSWORTH, WHO HEADED THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TO THE MEETING, SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES EXPECTED A POSTIVE OUTCOME FROM THE MBFR TALKS AND BELIEVES THAT THE SOVIET UNION ALSO HAS REASON TO WANT A POSITIVE OUTCOME. ACCORDING TO US OFFICIALS, SECRETARY ELLSWORTH, WHO HAD BEEN UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO NATO FROM 1969 TO 1971, SAID THAT WHILE THE TWO SIDES TO THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE STILL SOME DISTINACE APART, THIS WAS TO BE EXPECTED AT THIS STAGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

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THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE BRUSSELS MEETING HIGHLIGHTED THE DETERMINATION OF THE MINISTERS OF THE NATO NATIONS TO MAINTAIN THE STRENGTH OF THEIR MILITARY FORCES WHILE A SATISFACTORY

MBFR AGREEMENT IS BEING WORKED OUT. THE DEFENSE MINISTERS NOTED WITH

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CONCERN THE CURRENT PROGRAMS FOR THE EXPANSION AND MODERNIZATION OF WARSAW PACT FORCES TO AN EXTENT FAR IN EXCESS OF THAT REQUIRED FOR SELF

DEFENSE.

ACCORDING TO MR. COLLIN HUMPHREYS, NATO ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL FOR DEFENSE PLANNING AND POLICY, THE DEFENSE MINISTERS RECEIV-

ED A NATO BRIEFING ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GROWTH OF SOVIET MIL-ITARY
POWER AND A REVIEW BY SECRETARY ELLSWORTH ON DEVELOPMENTS IN SOVIET STRATEGIC NUCLEAR MISSILE FORCES, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS FIELD IN THE UNITED STATES, AND ON CHANGES IN THE UNITED STATES NUCLEAR TRAGETING DOCTRINE.

U.S. OFFICIALS SAID THAT DISCUSSION OF CONVENTIONAL FORCES ASSUMED MORE THAN USUAL IMPORTANCE AT TODAY'S MEETING. THE DEFENSE MINISTERS AGREED THAT THE ALLIED NATIONS HAVE THE RESOURCE POTENTIAL TO PROVIDE A SUBSTANTIAL DEFENSE CAPABILITY.

AS STEPS TOWARD REALIZATION OF THIS GOAL, THE DEFENSE MINISTERS DISCUSSED THE QUESTION OF STANDARDIZATION OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND AGREED TO CONCENTRATE THEIR NATIONS' EFFORTS ON THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC

AREAS: AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AIRCRAFT DETECTION AND TRACKING; ELECTRONIC WARFARE; STANDARDIZATION OF RIFLE AMMUNITION AND A NEW RIFLE FOR THE 1980'S; AND REPLACEMTN FOR THE F-104 G AIRCRAFT. THE MINISTERS NOTED WITH SATISFICATION A REPORT ON THE CONSULTATION BETWEEN

THE DEFENSE MINISTERS OF BELGIUM, DENMARK, THE NETHERLANDS AND NORWAY ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ADOPTING A COMMON SOLUTION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE F-104 G AND OTHER TYPES OF TACTICAL AIRCRAFT, AND THEY NOTED CANADA'S EXPRESSED INTEREST IN PARTICIPATING IN THESE DISCUSSIONS.

THE MINISTERS AGREED THAT FURTHER STUDIES ON IMPROVEMENT
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OF NATO FORCES THROUGH SPECIALIZTION OF TAKS SHOULD CONTINUE. THEY RECOGNIZED THAT PROGRESS IN THESE KEY AREAS WAS BECOMING OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE IN THE LIGHT OF GROWING PRESSURE ON DEFENSE BUDGETS AND INCREASING DEFENSE COSTS.

THE MINISTERS DECIDED AT TODAY'S MEETING TO ESTABLISH A NEW INTEGRATED COMMAND STURCTURE TO ENSURE MORE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF ALLIED AIR FORCES IN THE CENTRAL REGION. THEY AGREED THAT THE NEW HEADQUARTERS OF ALLIED AIR FORCES CENTRAL EUROPE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED

INITIALLY AT RAMSTEIN, GERMANY, AND THAT ITS PERMANENT LOCATION SHOULD

BE WITH THE EXISTING AFCENT HEADQUARTERS AT BRUNSSUM, NETHERLANDS.

THE COUNTERPART OF TODAY'S MEETING OF DEFENSE MINISTERS IS THE

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SEMI-NNUAL MEETING OF NATO FOREIGN MINISTERS WHICH IS TO TAKE PLACE
JUNE 18-19 IN OTTAWA.
HAMILTON

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